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The Role of Educational Psychology in Improving the Effectiveness of the Learning Process

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ABSTRACT

Educational psychology plays an important role in understanding students' learning processes and improving the effectiveness of learning in educational settings. This study aims to analyze the role of educational psychology in enhancing learning effectiveness through a review of relevant literature. The research employs a qualitative approach using the systematic literature review (SLR) method. Data were collected from several scientific databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, ERIC, DOAJ, Google Scholar, as well as national journal portals such as SINTA and Garuda. Through the processes of identification, screening, and eligibility evaluation, 22 relevant articles were selected for analysis. The data were analyzed using qualitative descriptive techniques through literature organization, concept categorization, and synthesis of research findings. The results indicate that educational psychology significantly contributes to learning effectiveness through factors such as learning motivation, student engagement, self-regulated learning, teacher-student interaction, teacher efficacy, and a conducive learning environment. These findings suggest that integrating educational psychology principles into teaching practices can support the development of adaptive instructional strategies, increase students' active participation, and create more effective learning environments.

INTRODUCTION

Slavin et al. (2025) explain that education is a systematic process aimed at developing students' potential through planned and continuous learning activities. In contemporary educational settings, the effectiveness of learning is influenced not only by teachers' mastery of subject matter but also by their ability to understand the characteristics and needs of learners. Learning itself involves cognitive, emotional, and social processes that shape how students receive, interpret, and construct knowledge. As educational environments become increasingly complex, attention to psychological aspects has

become an essential element in supporting effective learning processes and improving educational quality.

Educational psychology has developed as an important field that examines how individuals learn and the various factors that influence learning within educational contexts. O'Donnell et al. (2024) explain that educational psychology focuses on cognitive development, learning motivation, social interaction, and environmental conditions that influence students' learning success. Similarly, McNerney (2005) argues that educational psychology integrates theory, research, and educational practice to provide a scientific basis for understanding learning processes. Consequently, educational psychology serves not only as a theoretical discipline but also as a foundation for improving instructional practices in diverse educational settings.

In classroom practice, understanding students' psychological characteristics has become increasingly important in determining the quality of teaching and learning activities. Teachers are no longer viewed solely as providers of information but also as facilitators who support students in constructing meaningful learning experiences. Latipah (2021) emphasizes that teachers with a stronger understanding of educational psychology are more capable of designing effective instructional strategies and establishing positive interactions with students. Such conditions indicate that psychological perspectives contribute to the development of learning environments that are more responsive to students' needs.

Besides teachers' pedagogical competence, the diversity of learners represents one of the major challenges faced in contemporary classrooms. Students possess different abilities, interests, backgrounds, and learning preferences, making uniform instructional approaches less effective in addressing their needs. Within educational psychology studies, these individual differences have long been recognized as factors that influence how students process information and participate in learning activities. Wininger et al. (2019) found that the concept of learning styles continues to receive considerable attention in educational psychology literature as an attempt to explain variations in students' learning characteristics.

The rapid transformation of education in the digital era has further expanded the challenges encountered in the learning process. The increasing implementation of technology-based and online learning has created new demands for both teachers and students. In many cases, psychological issues such as reduced learning motivation, limited social interaction, and difficulties in independent learning have emerged as important concerns. ElSayary and Olowoselu (2023) explain that these challenges require educators to understand students' psychological conditions in order to develop more effective learning strategies. This situation suggests that learning effectiveness cannot be separated from psychological factors that influence students' engagement and learning experiences.

Educational psychology also provides important contributions in addressing various learning problems experienced by students. Learning difficulties are not solely associated with cognitive abilities but are also influenced by motivation, self-confidence, emotional conditions, and environmental factors. Nasution et al. (2025) explain that psychological approaches enable teachers to identify the causes of learning difficulties and formulate instructional strategies that are more appropriate to students' needs. In addition, the application of educational psychology principles contributes to the creation of safer and more supportive learning environments, including efforts to prevent bullying in schools, as reported by Damayanti et al. (2023).

Another important contribution of educational psychology is related to the development of instructional strategies that encourage active student participation. Hattie (2012) emphasizes that learning success is strongly influenced by the quality of teacher–student interactions and instructional approaches that promote engagement in learning activities. In this regard, educational psychology offers conceptual guidance for designing more student-centered learning experiences. Through a better

understanding of students' psychological needs, teachers are able to create learning processes that are more meaningful and effective.

Within the context of Islamic education, psychological perspectives also have strategic implications for curriculum development and the implementation of holistic learning. Sihono and Hamami (2025) explain that the integration of psychological principles in Islamic education supports students' cognitive, emotional, and spiritual development simultaneously. In line with this view, Putra et al. (2021) emphasize that educational psychology provides an important scientific foundation for understanding students' characteristics and learning needs. These findings indicate that the relevance of educational psychology extends across different educational contexts and learning traditions.

Although numerous studies have highlighted the importance of educational psychology in educational practice, many of them still focus on specific aspects or discuss psychological concepts separately. Azzahra and Darmiyanti (2024) show that existing studies predominantly emphasize general discussions regarding educational psychology without sufficiently explaining how various psychological factors collectively contribute to learning effectiveness. Previous studies have also tended to concentrate on particular issues, such as learning difficulties, motivation, or instructional strategies, resulting in fragmented findings (Aritonang et al., 2025; Nabila, 2025; Nasution et al., 2025). Consequently, a more comprehensive synthesis is required to provide a broader understanding of the contribution of educational psychology to effective learning.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to analyze the role of educational psychology in improving the effectiveness of the learning process and to identify the contribution of psychological principles in supporting successful teaching and learning activities. Through a review of relevant literature, this study synthesizes the psychological factors that influence learning effectiveness and provides a conceptual understanding of how these factors can be integrated into classroom practice. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of more adaptive, student-centered, and evidence-based instructional practices.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach using the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method to comprehensively examine the role of educational psychology in improving the effectiveness of the learning process. The review was conducted following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA 2020) guidelines to ensure transparency and rigor throughout the literature selection process (Page et al., 2021). The SLR approach enabled researchers to systematically identify, evaluate, and synthesize previous studies related to educational psychology and learning effectiveness in educational settings.

The literature search was conducted through several scientific databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, ERIC, DOAJ, Google Scholar, as well as national journal databases such as SINTA and Garuda. Publications published between 2000 and 2025 were considered in this review to incorporate both recent empirical studies and seminal theoretical works that have significantly contributed to the development of educational psychology. Foundational studies related to motivation, self-regulated learning, social cognitive theory, and teacher–student interaction were retained because they continue to provide important theoretical frameworks for contemporary educational research. The search process employed several keywords and combinations of Boolean operators, including "educational psychology", "learning effectiveness", "student engagement", and "learning motivation", with search strings such as ("educational psychology") AND ("learning effectiveness" OR "student engagement" OR

"learning motivation").

The selection of literature was based on predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria comprised: (1) articles published in peer-reviewed scientific journals; (2) empirical, conceptual, theoretical, or review studies discussing educational psychology and learning effectiveness; (3) full-text articles available in English or Indonesian; and (4) publications issued between 2000 and 2025. Meanwhile, the exclusion criteria included duplicate records, non-academic publications, articles unrelated to the research objectives, and studies whose full texts were unavailable.

The article selection process followed several stages based on the PRISMA framework, including identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion (Page et al., 2021). Initially, 74 records were identified from the selected databases. After removing duplicate and irrelevant records based on titles and abstracts, 53 articles remained for the screening stage. Subsequently, full-text eligibility assessment was conducted, resulting in 38 articles that met the relevance requirements. Following a more detailed evaluation based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria, 22 articles were finally selected and included as the primary sources for analysis. The complete article selection procedure is presented in the PRISMA flow diagram.

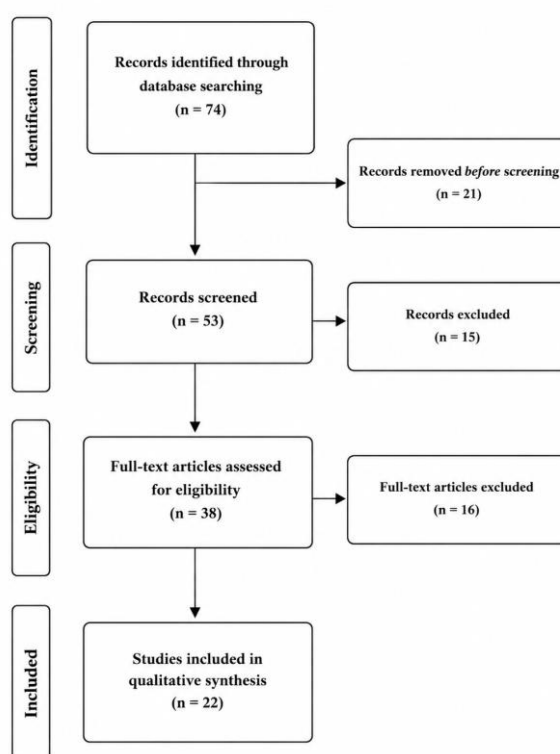


Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram of the Literature Selection Process

Data analysis was conducted using thematic synthesis techniques. The selected articles were first organized and examined according to their research focus and major findings. Similar concepts and findings were subsequently categorized into broader themes to identify recurring patterns regarding the contribution of educational psychology to learning effectiveness. Through this process, several interconnected themes emerged, including learning motivation, student engagement, self-regulated learning, teacher–student interaction, learning

environment, and individual differences among learners. The themes identified through the synthesis served as the basis for organizing the Results and Discussion section. Finally, the synthesis results were interpreted to formulate a conceptual understanding of the implementation of educational psychology principles in learning practices.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Characteristics of Selected Studies

The literature selection process in this study followed the PRISMA framework, consisting of identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion stages. The literature search was conducted through several scientific databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, ERIC, DOAJ, Google Scholar, as well as national journal databases such as SINTA and Garuda. Initially, 74 records related to educational psychology and learning effectiveness were identified. After the screening process based on titles, abstracts, and duplicate removal, 53 articles remained for further evaluation. Subsequently, full-text eligibility assessment resulted in 38 articles that met the relevance requirements. Following a more detailed evaluation based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria, 22 articles were finally selected and included in the analysis. The complete literature selection process is illustrated in the PRISMA flow diagram.

The characteristics of the selected articles indicate that research on educational psychology and learning effectiveness has developed across diverse educational contexts and employed various methodological approaches. The reviewed studies encompass literature reviews, conceptual studies, qualitative research, content analyses, theoretical works, and empirical investigations. This diversity demonstrates that educational psychology has evolved not only as a theoretical discipline but also as a practical foundation for improving instructional quality and supporting students' learning success.

Several studies consistently emphasize the importance of understanding students' psychological characteristics in enhancing learning effectiveness. For example, Azzahra and Darmiyanti (2024) explain that knowledge of students' psychological characteristics enables teachers to adjust instructional strategies to accommodate diverse learning needs. Similarly, Damayanti et al. (2023) and Komara et al. (2023) demonstrate that educational psychology approaches contribute to the creation of more conducive learning environments and positively influence students' learning outcomes. These findings suggest that psychological perspectives have become increasingly important in supporting effective learning practices across different educational settings.

In general, the analyzed literature reflects the multidimensional nature of educational psychology by addressing issues related to motivation, learning environments, instructional interactions, and student development. The diversity of research approaches and educational contexts indicates that educational psychology continues to contribute to both theoretical development and practical implementation in contemporary education. A summary of the characteristics of the selected articles is presented in Table 1.

Thematic Synthesis of Educational Psychology and Learning Effectiveness

Furthermore, the synthesis of the reviewed studies revealed several recurring patterns regarding the contribution of educational psychology to learning effectiveness. These patterns consistently emerged across different educational contexts and research approaches, indicating common factors that support successful learning processes. The findings demonstrate that educational psychology contributes to learning effectiveness through multiple interconnected dimensions rather than through isolated factors. These recurring patterns subsequently served as the basis for organizing the results and discussion presented in this study.

Table 1. Characteristics of Selected Articles

No	Author(s)	Year	Research Focus	Method
1	Azzahra & Darmiyanti	2024	Educational psychology in diverse classrooms	Literature study
2	Damayanti et al.	2023	Educational psychology for bullying prevention	Qualitative
3	Hu & Xiao	2025	Online learning engagement factors	Systematic review
4	Hattie	2012	Impact of teaching strategies on learning	Meta-analysis
5	Latipah	2021	Psychological perspective in teaching	Qualitative
6	McInerney	2005	Development of educational psychology research	Review
7	Nasution et al.	2025	Educational psychology in learning difficulties	Literature study
8	O'Donnell et al.	2024	Educational psychology concepts	Conceptual study
9	Putra et al.	2021	Importance of psychology in education	Conceptual study
10	Sihono & Hamami	2025	Psychology in Islamic curriculum development	Qualitative
11	Slavin et al.	2025	Educational psychology in learning processes	Theoretical
12	Wininger et al.	2019	Learning styles in education	Content analysis
13	Zimmerman	2002	Self-regulated learning	Conceptual
14	Schunk & Meece	2012	Student perception in classrooms	Theoretical
15	Bandura	2001	Social cognitive theory	Conceptual
16	Ryan & Deci	2000	Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation	Theoretical
17	Wentzel	2009	Teacher–student relationships	Conceptual
18	Fredricks et al.	2004	Student engagement in school	Literature review
19	Tschannen-Moran & Hoy	2007	Teacher self-efficacy	Quantitative
20	Dörnyei	2001	Motivational strategies in learning	Conceptual
21	Eccles & Wigfield	2002	Motivational beliefs, values, and goals in learning	Conceptual review
22	Komara et al.	2023	Educational psychology in differentiated learning	Qualitative

The thematic synthesis of the reviewed studies indicates that educational psychology contributes substantially to learning effectiveness by providing a deeper understanding of students' learning dynamics. The findings suggest that successful learning is not determined solely by cognitive abilities but is also influenced by psychological factors such as learning motivation, social interaction, and supportive learning environments. These factors are interconnected and collectively influence students' willingness to participate actively in learning activities. Therefore, effective learning should be understood as a multidimensional process involving cognitive, emotional, and social aspects rather than focusing exclusively on academic achievement.

Slavin et al. (2025) explain that learning effectiveness is strongly influenced by teachers' ability to understand students' psychological characteristics and to design instructional strategies that align with their learning needs. Similarly, O'Donnell et al. (2024) and McInerney (2005) emphasize that educational psychology provides a theoretical foundation for understanding

how learning occurs and how instructional practices can be improved. These perspectives indicate that educational psychology serves as an important framework for connecting learners' characteristics with appropriate instructional strategies.

The reviewed studies further demonstrate that learning motivation represents one of the most influential factors in promoting effective learning. Eccles and Wigfield (2002) explain that students' motivational beliefs and learning goals influence their engagement in classroom activities. In line with this perspective, motivational processes enable students to participate actively, persist in overcoming learning challenges, and develop positive attitudes toward learning. The consistency of these findings across different studies suggests that motivation constitutes a fundamental component that cannot be separated from efforts to improve educational outcomes.

The synthesis also indicates that students' psychological support plays an important role in maintaining their engagement and persistence in learning. Students who experience supportive learning conditions tend to demonstrate stronger participation and commitment to learning activities (Simatupang & Bui, 2025). Consequently, the application of educational psychology principles enables teachers to develop adaptive instructional strategies and create learning environments that encourage active participation. Integrating psychological perspectives into instructional practices therefore contributes not only to strengthening teacher–student interactions but also to improving the overall quality and effectiveness of learning.

Overall, the findings reveal that learning motivation and student engagement are closely interconnected dimensions that influence the success of the learning process. Educational psychology provides a conceptual foundation that helps educators understand these dimensions and implement learning practices that are more responsive to students' psychological needs.

Table 2. Psychological Factors Influencing Learning Effectiveness

No	Psychological Factor	Description	Supporting References
1	Learning Motivation	Learning motivation encourages students to participate actively in learning activities and improves academic achievement.	Ryan & Deci (2000); Eccles & Wigfield (2002); Dörnyei (2001)
2	Student Engagement	Active participation and involvement of students in learning activities enhance understanding and academic performance.	Fredricks et al. (2004); Hu & Xiao (2025)
3	Self-Regulated Learning	Students' ability to regulate their own learning processes improves independent learning and academic success.	Zimmerman (2002)
4	Teacher–Student Interaction	Positive relationships between teachers and students support meaningful learning experiences and increase motivation.	Wentzel (2009); Latipah (2021)
5	Teacher Self-Efficacy	Teachers' confidence in their teaching abilities influences instructional quality and student achievement.	Tschannen-Moran & Hoy (2007)
6	Social Cognitive Learning	Learning occurs through interactions between personal factors, environment, and behavior.	Bandura (2001)
7	Learning Environment	Supportive, safe, and positive learning environments enhance motivation and participation in learning.	Damayanti et al. (2023); Azzahra & Darmiyanti (2024)
8	Individual	Differences in students' learning styles and	Wininger et al. (2019)

	Differences and Learning Styles	abilities influence how they process and understand learning materials.	
9	Effective Teaching Strategies	Instructional strategies that consider psychological aspects improve learning outcomes and student engagement.	Hattie (2012); Slavin et al. (2025); Komara et al. (2023)
10	Educational Psychology Perspective in Learning	Psychological principles help teachers understand learning processes, overcome learning difficulties, and design effective learning environments.	O'Donnell et al. (2024); McInerney (2005); Nasution et al. (2025); Sihono & Hamami (2025); Putra et al. (2021); Schunk & Meece (2012)

Theme 1. Learning Motivation and Student Engagement

The results of the literature analysis indicate that psychological factors such as learning motivation, student engagement, and social relationships within the learning environment have a substantial influence on learning effectiveness. Ryan and Deci (2000) explain that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation play an important role in encouraging students' engagement in learning activities. This finding is supported by Bandura's (2001) social cognitive theory, which emphasizes that learning outcomes are shaped by interactions among individuals, their environment, and their learning experiences. Likewise, Fredricks et al. (2004) demonstrate that higher levels of student engagement contribute to deeper conceptual understanding and improved learning outcomes. The consistency of these findings suggests that motivation and engagement are closely interconnected and jointly influence students' willingness to invest cognitive and emotional effort in learning. Consequently, strengthening students' motivation and promoting active participation should become central considerations in instructional practice.

Theme 2. Self-Regulated Learning and Supportive Relationships

In addition to motivation and engagement, several studies highlight the importance of students' ability to regulate their own learning processes. Zimmerman (2002) explains that self-regulated learning enables students to manage learning strategies, monitor their progress, and maintain motivation throughout the learning process. Positive relationships between teachers and students also contribute to students' confidence and persistence in learning (Wentzel, 2009; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). These findings indicate that effective learning is not solely determined by instructional delivery but also by students' capacity to assume responsibility for their own learning. Therefore, learning environments that encourage autonomy and provide continuous support are essential for fostering more meaningful learning experiences.

The consistency of findings across previous studies may be explained by the fact that most educational psychology research is grounded in similar theoretical assumptions emphasizing the interaction between cognitive, affective, and social dimensions of learning. Although the reviewed studies were conducted in different educational contexts, motivation, engagement, and supportive relationships consistently emerged as important predictors of learning effectiveness. This pattern indicates that psychological factors represent universal elements of learning that remain relevant across various instructional settings and learner characteristics (Sunarsih et al., 2025). Overall, these findings indicate that self-regulated learning and supportive relationships function as complementary factors that strengthen students' engagement and contribute to more meaningful learning experiences.

Theme 3. Adaptive Learning Environments and Learner Diversity

Differences in students' characteristics represent another important issue discussed in educational psychology. Students possess diverse abilities, backgrounds, interests, and learning preferences, making it difficult for a single instructional approach to accommodate all learners effectively. Wininger et al. (2019) found that the concept of learning styles remains widely discussed in

educational psychology literature as an attempt to explain variations in how students process information. However, recent studies have questioned the empirical support for rigid learning style classifications and suggest that flexible instructional approaches are more effective in responding to learner diversity (Goyibova et al., 2025). This difference in perspectives indicates that understanding individual differences remains important, but instructional decisions should focus on adaptive teaching practices rather than relying exclusively on learning style categories.

Technological developments have also transformed the learning process and introduced new psychological challenges. Technology-based and online learning have become integral components of contemporary education systems. Hu and Xiao (2025) explain that students' engagement in online learning is strongly influenced by motivation, social interaction, and support from the learning environment. These findings indicate that the successful implementation of educational technology depends not only on digital infrastructure but also on teachers' ability to maintain students' psychological involvement during learning activities. Therefore, the integration of technology in education should be accompanied by instructional approaches that consider students' emotional and social needs.

The literature review further demonstrates that educational psychology provides valuable insights for addressing students' learning difficulties. Learning problems may arise from multiple factors, including cognitive limitations, low motivation, and unfavorable learning environments. Nasution et al. (2025) explain that psychological approaches enable teachers to identify the underlying causes of learning difficulties and design interventions that are more responsive to students' needs. These findings suggest that learning difficulties should not be viewed solely from an academic perspective but should also consider the psychological conditions experienced by learners. Such an approach allows teachers to provide more personalized and effective learning support.

Another important contribution of educational psychology lies in creating positive and supportive learning environments. A conducive learning environment enhances students' sense of security, motivation, and participation in learning activities. Damayanti et al. (2023) show that the application of educational psychology principles can contribute to bullying prevention and foster healthier social relationships among students. Similarly, Sihono and Hamami (2025) and Putra et al. (2021) emphasize that psychological perspectives support the development of more holistic educational processes. These findings suggest that educational psychology contributes not only to academic achievement but also to students' social and emotional development.

Findings from the reviewed studies consistently indicate that integrating educational psychology principles contributes to more student-centered instructional practices. Slavin et al. (2025) explain that understanding psychological factors enables teachers to design instructional strategies that align with students' learning characteristics. In addition, Hattie (2012) emphasizes that the quality of teacher–student interaction remains one of the strongest determinants of learning success. The convergence of these findings demonstrates that effective learning depends not only on curriculum content but also on teachers' ability to understand how students learn and respond to instructional experiences. Overall, adaptive learning environments and consideration of learner diversity enable educators to respond more effectively to students' psychological and instructional needs across different learning contexts.

From a practical perspective, these findings imply that teachers should pay greater attention to students' psychological needs when designing learning experiences. Strengthening learning motivation, fostering positive teacher–student relationships, promoting self-regulated learning, and creating supportive classroom environments are essential strategies for improving learning effectiveness. In increasingly diverse classrooms, adaptive and student-centered instruction becomes an important prerequisite for achieving meaningful learning outcomes.

Overall, the synthesis of the literature indicates that learning effectiveness is influenced by multiple interconnected psychological factors, including motivation, engagement, self-regulated learning, social interaction, and supportive learning environments. While previous studies have frequently examined these factors separately, the present review demonstrates their interrelated nature and provides a more comprehensive understanding of learning effectiveness from an educational psychology perspective. Therefore, integrating educational psychology into teaching practices offers not only theoretical insights but also practical guidance for designing effective learning across diverse educational contexts.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This study demonstrates that educational psychology plays a significant role in improving the effectiveness of the learning process through an understanding of various psychological aspects of students, such as learning motivation, student engagement, social interaction, and self-regulated learning ability. The synthesis of various literature sources indicates that the application of educational psychology principles helps educators design more adaptive instructional strategies, create conducive learning environments, and increase students' active participation in learning activities. Therefore, integrating educational psychology perspectives into teaching practices becomes an important factor in supporting the success of the educational process. Future research is recommended to examine the empirical implementation of educational psychology in various learning contexts in order to gain a deeper understanding of its contribution to improving the quality of education.

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